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Street Renamed In Honor of Garnet Douglass Baltimore

Baltimore was the first ever African American graduate of RPI

For Immediate Release
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(September 8, 2005- TROY)- The City of Troy and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute honored Garnet Douglass Baltimore Thursday, ceremonially changing the name of a portion of 8th Street in honor of the first African-American graduate in the history of RPI.

Mayor Harry J Tutunjian joined with City Council President Marjorie Mahar DerGurahian, RPI President Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, members of Baltimore's extended family, and other local dignitaries on Thursday to officially proclaim the new street name in honor of Baltimore, who is being posthumously inducted into the Rensselaer Hall of Fame this weekend.

Baltimore's (1859-1946) list of achievements is quite long, and has contributed greatly to life in New York State, particularly in the City of Troy. He will forever be known here as the designer and engineer of Prospect Park. As one of the City's greatest treasures, this turn of the century urban recreational area is still utilized by Troy residents to this day, despite it being built more than 100 years ago. With its rolling hills, unique views, and wonderful atmosphere, Prospect Park is a lasting legacy left to Troy by the brilliance of Garnet Douglass Baltimore.

"By all accounts, Garnet Douglass Baltimore was a man of vision who loved the City of Troy," Tutunjian said Thursday. "For too long his remarkable successes have been overlooked by so many residents of this area. He is responsible for one of the great treasures in the City of Troy and should be an inspiration to many people. The story of his legacy will begin to be told with this great event."

President Jackson said Wednesday that: "Garnet Baltimore left his mark on this beautiful city and state in so many ways, through the parks, cemeteries, canals, and railroads he had a hand in building. Though most may have forgotten who brought them these magnificent feats of design and engineering, many to this day enjoy the benefits of his work. I applaud Mayor Tutunjian, Troy City Council president Marge DerGurahian, and others in our community who have lead the effort to honor Garnet Baltimore's legacy."

DerGurahian sponsored legislation earlier this year ceremonially renaming 8th Street from Federal Street to Congress Street as Garnet Douglass Baltimore Street. Eighth Street currently leads directly to Baltimore's greatest design, Prospect Park. DerGurahian said Wednesday that she hopes Baltimore would begin to be recognized for his amazing talents and determination.

“This is an opportunity for the City of Troy to educate our residents and visitors about Garnet Douglass Baltimore and all his accomplishments,” DerGurahian said. “We can only imagine the determination needed for Mr. Baltimore to pursue higher education before the turn of the 19th Century.”